Congressman

Dick Durbin

20th District, Illinois

News Release

2463 Rayburn Building, Washington, D.C. 20515

EDITOR'S NOTE: SEE ATTACHED LETTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PRESIDENT ASSURES DURBIN OF COMMITMENT TO BALTIC, EASTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPEAN SECURITY

Washington, D.C. -- In a letter written this week, President Clinton has assured U.S. Rep. Dick Durbin that the Administration totally opposes a draft military doctrine circulating in Russia aimed at preventing the Baltic, Eastern and Central European nations from joining NATO.

The President's letter was in response to a November 21 letter from Durbin expressing concern over news reports that the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces has drafted a military doctrine which calls for moving troops into Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia if they join NATO and deploying tactical nuclear weapons on Russia's border with Poland and Norway (and at Russian military bases in the Crimean peninsula, Abkhazia, Georgia and Armenia) if NATO membership is extended to the Baltics, Poland, the Czech Republic or Hungary.

Durbin's letter, which was signed by 41 other Members of the House, urged Clinton to oppose any such military doctrine. The letter also stated that U.S. policy in Eastern and Central Europe should be based on two goals: to support the security of the new democracies in the Baltics, Eastern and Central Europe; and to create a climate of trust in U.S. relations with Russia so that country understands the West has no hostile intentions toward Russia's territory or its people.

"I am very heartened by the President's strong response to our letter," Durbin said. "He has made it very clear that the United States will not tolerate aggression against the new democracies of Eastern and Central Europe."

The text of President Clinton's response to Durbin's letter is attached.

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